CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	LUL #3073354 for a water pipeline and one stock water tank.
Proposed Implementation Date:	Spring 2018
Proponents:	Jeff Habets, 16163 Old Shelby Road, Conrad, MT 59425
Location:	S2NE4, SE4, Section 18, T30N, R3W
County:	Pondera
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Jeff Habets, lessee of state leases #10776 has requested to place a livestock water line and one stock water tank on and across state land located in Section 18, T30N, R3W. This will allow them to connect to a private water source located on deeded land. The water line will be 1.50" HDPE pipe static plowed to a depth of 6' for approximately 3,760.00' on state land. One stock water tanks will be placed on state land. A detailed map showing the location for this project lay out is included within this assessment. The primary objective is to provide reliable stock water to deeded and state pasture to allow for better livestock distribution.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Jeff Habets-Proponent, Surface Lessee, Leases #10776.
DNRC-Surface Owner
FSA-CRP Owner

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

There are no other agencies with jurisdiction on this project.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Deny the proponent permission to place the stock water line and one stock water tank.

Alternative B (the Proposed action) – Grant the proponent permission to place the stock water line and one stock water tank.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

The soil types are primarily made up of silty and thin hilly sites. These soil types are made up of gently rolling topography. Equipment will cause localized areas of soil compaction and will disturb the soil were the water line is being placed. Reclamation requirements are to compact and level the plow scar created in the installation of the water line. Then seed the impacted area with the existing grass types and seeding rates that are listed in item 7 of this assessment. Cumulative impacts on soil resources are not expected and any difficulties will be further mitigated using a static plow to place the water line which will cause limited soil disturbance. In addition, the disturbed areas will be reclaimed and reseeded by the proponents.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

The water source to feed the project is located on private land owned by the proponent. The proposed action will improve overall water reliability and quantity for the proponent on the state and adjacent deeded pastures. Cumulative effects to water resources are not expected from the project. The water line will be buried and the additional stock water tank will provide reliable water to livestock. Other water quality and/or quantity issues will not be impacted by the proposed action.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

The proposed action will not impact the air quality.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Vegetation will be minimally impacted as approximately 3,760.00' of 1.50" HDPE pipe will be placed 6' deep. The pipe will be installed by the utilization of a static plow. Noxious and annual weeds within the proposed construction areas are a concern, but this concern will be mitigated as the proponents are responsible for controlling weeds within the construction areas. Cumulative impacts on the vegetative resources are not expected as the proposed construction areas will be reclaimed and reseeded. The reseeding mixture will consist of a grass seed mixture of 35% Western Wheatgrass, 35% Slender Wheatgrass, 15% Bluebunch Wheatgrass, , 10% Green Needlegrass, and 5% Lewis Blue Flax. If drilled the rate will be 8#/acre. If broadcast the rate will be doubled. The CRP will be reseeded with a FSA approved seeding mix.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted and there were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The area is not considered critical wildlife habitat. However, these tracts provide habitat for a variety of big game species (mule deer, whitetail deer, pronghorn antelope), predators (coyote, fox, badger), upland game birds (sharp tail grouse, Hungarian partridge), other non-game mammals, raptors and various songbirds. The proposal does not include any land use change which would yield changes to the wildlife habitat. The proposed action will not impact wildlife forage, cover, or traveling corridors. Nor will this action change the juxtaposition of wildlife forage, water, or hiding and thermal cover. Wildlife usage is expected to return to "normal" (pre-action usage) following the completion of the project. The proposed project will also provide a reliable water source for wildlife.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:
Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

There are no threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern associated with the proposed tract.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T30N, R3W. There were zero animal species of concern, zero potential species of concern, and zero special status species noted on the NRIS survey

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

Patrick Rennie, DNRC archaeologist, was contacted and he stated that due to the tract being CRP or tame pasture, no historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources would be present.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The livestock water line will be buried so there will be no aesthetic impacts.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed action. The proposed action will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed project.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tract listed on this EA.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

The proposed project will not change human safety in the area.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

The proposed livestock water development will improve livestock distribution and generally improve the proponent's ranching opportunities.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

The proposed action will not significantly affect long-term employment in the surrounding communities.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

The proposed action will not affect tax revenue.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

This project is of a small scale and being funded by the EQIP program. There will be no excessive stress placed of the existing infrastructure of the area.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

The proposed action is in compliance with State and County laws. No other management plans are in effect for the area.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

This proposed project area is accessible via the Trunk Butte and Sunshine Road. The tract generally has moderate recreational value. The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational and wilderness activities on this state tract.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing

The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

No direct or cumulative effects to population or housing are anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be impacted by the proposal.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed action will not impact the cultural uniqueness or diversity of the area.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

This project will generate $25.00 for the LUL application fee and $200.00 for the ten-year term of the license. Cumulative impacts are not likely as the area is only used for agriculture, CRP, and livestock grazing and the buried livestock water pipeline will improve the long-term viability of grazing on the tract. The addition of the one livestock water tank will provide a reliable source of water to the pastures which will positively impact livestock distribution.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:** Tony Nickol	**Date:** March 29, 2018
	Title: Land Use Specialist, Conrad Unit, Central Land Office	

V. FINDINGS

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (the Proposed action) – Grant the proponent permission to place the stock water line and one stock water tank.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

This water pipeline will improve livestock distribution and generally allow for better management of the state lease. Overall, no negative environmental impacts are expected.

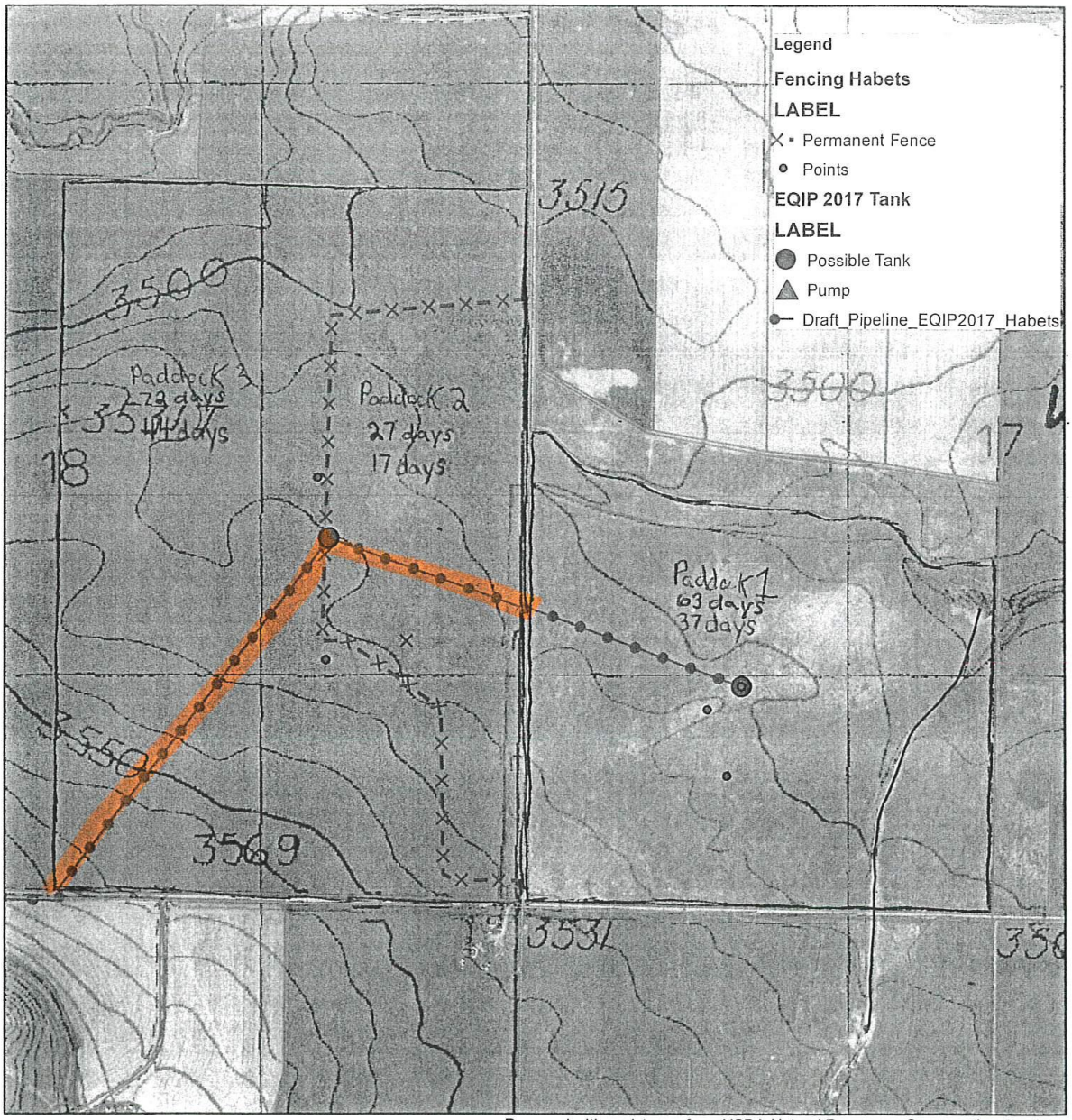
27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

☐	EIS	☐	More Detailed EA	X	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Erik Eneboe
	Title:	Conrad Unit Manger, CLO, DNRC
Signature: 	**Date**:	April 5, 2018

Jeff Habet's 2017 Map for Calculating AUMs

Field Office: CONRAD FIELD OFFICE
Agency: USDA NRCS
Assisted By: Jim Cave
Date: 10/2/2017
Location: T 30N, R 3W, Sections 16, 17 and 19



Prepared with assistance from USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

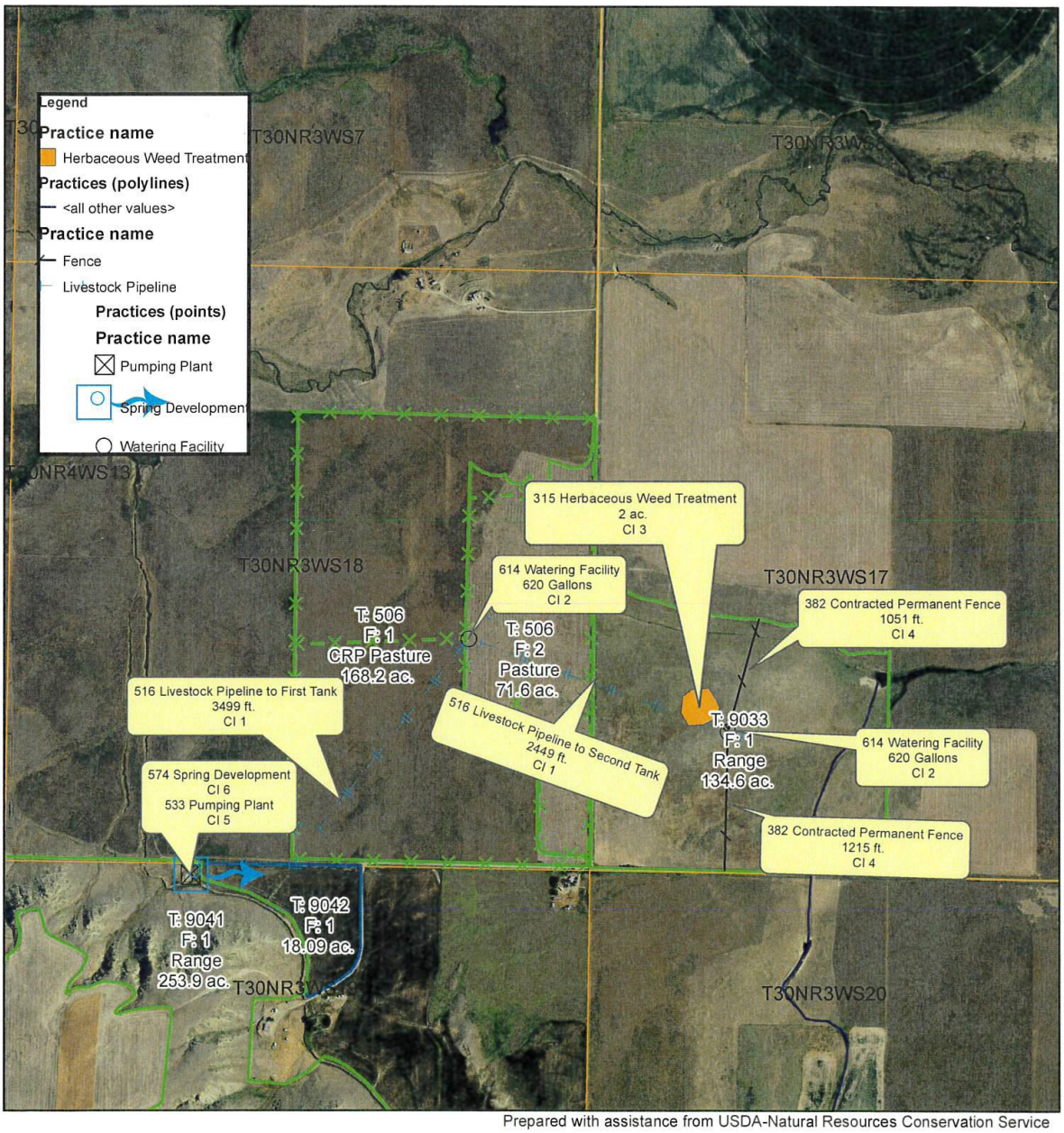
USDA

Jeff Habet's 2018 EQIP Plan Map

Field Office: CONRAD FIELD OFFICE
Agency: USDA NRCS

Assisted By: Jim Cave

Date: 3/27/2018
Location: T 30N, R 3W, Sections 17, 18 and 19



Prepared with assistance from USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

USDA

725 0 725 1,450 2,175 2,900 Feet

1:15,000

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